KHAZAR UNIVERSITY

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MA THESIS

Methods of Efficient Instruction of Reading 1 and 2 for University Students

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ABSTRACT

The aim of this research is to introduce the efficient strategies needed to facilitate reading and to explain how these strategies can be taught. The core topic of this thesis is efficient teaching of reading. The purpose is to see if it is possible to sum up the qualities of a good teacher and good teaching in an appropriate learning environment so that one could hold these qualities up as benchmark for all teachers to see and aspire towards achieving some kind of appropriate standard.

Within the educational community, there has been a remarkable diversity in the definitions of effective teaching. I have discovered and provided in the thesis a wide range of very diverse interpretations of teaching theories and philosophies, of very different starting points that will clearly influence the teacher's actions in the classroom and of many different approaches to what actually happens in the classroom and how teachers relate to what they do in their teaching environment.

The first chapter discusses the concept of efficient teaching. In addition, it mentions the method and techniques used in effective instruction of Reading 1-2. It shows the importance of the direct method, cooperative learning, and cognitive theories. Moreover, it describes the similarities and differences of these methods and techniques.

In the second chapter, the concentration is on practical guidelines for the effective instruction of Reading. It discusses three main aspects of teaching reading in university environment: 1.Reading Purpose and Reading Comprehension; 2. Strategies for the development of reading 1-2 skills; 3. Methods of assessment of reading skills.

Traditionally, the purpose of learning to read in a language has been to have access to the literature written in that language. In language instruction, reading materials have traditionally been chosen from literary texts that represent "higher" forms of culture.

This approach assumes that students learn to read a language by studying its vocabulary, grammar, and sentence structure, not by actually reading it.

The communicative approach to language teaching has given instructors a different understanding of the role of reading in the language classroom and the types of texts that can be used in instruction

Teachers should continuously assess their students' reading skills and strategies and use this information as the bases for instruction, and students themselves should be given opportunities to assess their growth and development as a part of this process. The daily and long-range planning assessment of reading skills and strategies is essential in teaching reading lessons at both levels. Although formal assessment may not take place every day, there are many kinds of informal assessment which may be applied within the context of actual classroom work.

Instructors often use comprehension questions to test whether students have understood what they have read. In order to test comprehension appropriately, these questions need to be coordinated with the purpose for reading. If the purpose is to find specific information, comprehension questions should focus on that information. If the purpose is to understand an opinion and the arguments that support it, comprehension questions should ask about those points.

Effective language instructors are responsible for teaching students how they can adjust their reading behavior to deal with a variety of situations, types of input, and reading purposes. They help students develop a set of reading strategies and match appropriate strategies to each reading situation.

Strategies that can help students read more quickly and effectively include previewing, predicting, skimming and scanning, guessing, and paraphrasing.

The main objective of the reading classes is to enable students to enjoy reading in English and to read without help with sufficient speed. I have tried to introduce the main strategies and techniques employed in teaching reading efficiently in this thesis.

INTRODUCTION

At the beginning of this year, I set a goal to define the concept of a good teaching. The core topic of this thesis is efficient teaching of reading. The purpose is to see if it is possible to sum up the qualities of a good teacher and good teaching in a good learning environment so that one could hold these qualities up as a benchmark for all teachers to see and aspire towards achieving some kind of excellent standard. I have discovered a wide range of very diverse interpretations of teaching theories and philosophies, of very different starting points that will clearly influence the teacher's actions in the classroom and of many different approaches to what actually happens in the classroom and how teachers relate to what they do in their teaching environment. I have also sat in teacher's classroom for hour-long periods or for short ten-minute visits, I have spoken to experienced and first year teachers.

Within the educational community there has been a remarkable diversity in the definition of effective teaching. In my opinion, effective teaching requires first of all individuals who are academically able, who have good command of the subject they are going (or sometimes required) to teach, and care about the well being of children and youth. But according to Richard Arends ('Learning to teach"), these characteristic are just prerequisites for the teaching, but they are not enough without "our high-level attributes":

1. Effective teachers have personal qualities that allow them to develop authentic human relationships with their students, parents, and colleagues and to create democratic classrooms for students.

2. Effective teachers have positive dispositions toward knowledge. They have command of at least three broad knowledge bases that deal with subject matter, human development and learning, and pedagogy. They use this knowledge to guide the science and art of their teaching practice.

3. Effective teachers command a repertoire of teaching practices known to stimulate student motivation, to enhance students' achievement of basic skills, to develop higher-level thinking, and to produce self-regulated learners.

4. Effective teachers are personally disposed toward reflection and problem solving. They consider learning to teach a lifelong process, and they can diagnose situations and adapt and use their professional knowledge appropriately to enhance student learning and to improve schools.

Chapter I

Methods and ways of effective Instruction of Reading

a) Concept of "effective teaching"

What is good or effective teaching? Smith (1995) suggests that learning "a consequence of experience". He argues that education and therefore teaching, should be focused on the creation of "appropriately nourishing experiences so that learning comes about naturally and inevitably" Thus, teachers should reflect on what they do in the classroom rather than on all the talk about theory and practice.

Then Alton-Lee (2003) has provided ten clearly defined and research supported features of quality teaching. Alton-Lee's ten-point model includes the following areas:

1. *A focus on student achievement.*
2. *Pedagogical practices that create caring, inclusive and cohesive learning communities.*
3. *Effective links between school and the cultural context of the school.*
4. *Quality teaching is responsive to students learning processes.*
5. *Learning opportunities are effective and sufficient.*
6. *Multiple tasks and contexts support learning cycles.*
7. *Curriculum goals are effectively aligned.*
8. *Pedagogy scaffolds feedback on students' task engagement.*
9. *Pedagogy promotes learning orientations, student self-regulation, metacognitive strategies and thoughtful student discourse.*
10. *Teachers and students engage constructively in goal-oriented assessment.*

(Alton-Lee, 2003: vi-x)

Philip Gurney has suggested another five key factors that could contribute to an effective and worthwhile learning and teaching environment. In his article about effective

teaching for New Zealand Journal of Teachers' Work (Volume 4, Issue 2, 89-98, 2007) he states that the creation of an effective learning environment depends on the interaction of the following five key factors:

1. *Teacher knowledge, enthusiasm and responsibility for learning.*
2. *Classroom activities that encourage learning.*
3. *Assessment activities that encourage learning through experience.*
4. *Effective feedback that establishes the learning processes in the classroom.*
5. *Effective interaction between the teacher and the students, creating an environment that respects, encourages and stimulates learning through experience.*

(Philip Gurney, p.91)

Teachers' competence is a priceless ingredient of good teaching. Classroom is the reflection of teacher's knowledge, enthusiasm and the responsibility for creating the learning environment that will effectively nurture the students' desire to learn. Day (1999) suggests a model for reflective professionalism that includes the following key words: "Learning, Participation, Collaboration, Co-operation, Activism". These ideas effective teachers should keep in mind.

Teachers can enjoy the process of teaching by sharing their knowledge. The teacher that is willing to share his knowledge will be stepping towards the effective classroom.

At the same time teachers is the guardian for learning in the classroom environment. Strong, Silver and Robinson (1995) put forward the acronyms SCORE to suggest a model of students' engagement:

S: *The Success of mastery of the subject that you teach.*

C: *The Curiosity that every teacher should have entrenched in their teaching. A teacher who is not curious has lost a critical portion of the passion for learning.*

O: *Originality – a teacher who is passionate about the teaching process will be creative; will be constantly seeking new ways of engaging and challenging students.*

R: *Relationships are central to the effective classroom and teachers are crucial in the nurturing of opportunities for students to engage with subjects that at senior levels can lead to a life-long interaction with the subject.*

E: *To maintain the process the teacher needs Energy. It is an essential ingredient in the effective classroom that is too often ignored.*

(SCORE acronym adapted from Strong, 1995: 9-11)

A Brief History of Effective Reading-Teaching Research

A great deal of the teacher-education has been focusing on issues related to "effective teaching". Effective teaching research refers to attributes the make a teacher effective in the classroom. Initial inquiries into teacher effectiveness began about 1900, and peaked in the 1920s and 1930s. Then it remained an area of interest until 1950s (Ellena, Stevenson and Webb 1961). The first era of teacher-effectiveness research was described by Cruikshank (1986) as a search for teacher traits that described and permitted identification of someone as a "good" teacher. Most of these studies involved the use of rating scales and rates and the use if students-achievement gains as criteria. Rupley, Wise, and Logan (1986) have noted that these ratings were usually done by supervisors and tended to be subjective judgments with low reliability and validity. They just attempted to evaluate such areas as discipline, promptness, personality and techniques of instruction. The result of these first-era studies was that little was learned about teacher effectiveness or how to select, train, encourage, or evaluate that effectiveness (Biddle and Ellena 1964).

Cruickshank (1986) identifies the second era of teacher-effectiveness research as beginning the 1960s and continuing today. It is characterized as one that used more objective classroom-observation instruments.

Heilman, Blair, and Rupley (1994) suggested that effective teachers of reading help students focus on learning to read by 1) providing more time for reading instruction; 2) keeping students actively engaged during instruction; 3) providing appropriate feedback related to instruction; 4) setting specific purposes for reading; 5) presenting an overview of what is to be learned before the lesson is taught; 6) using illustrations and examples to relate new learning to previous learning to activate their schemata and to help them learn how to apply this information; 7) monitoring students' participation to increase the probability of success.

Clarck (1995) reviewed and summarized the characteristics of effective instruction that he found most applicable to reading, these are as follows:

1) Effective instruction involves high but achievable expectations
2) Effective instruction is direct and explicit
3) The tasks that the students engage in to learn and to practice should be meaningful and functional for them.

In essence a teacher who bring a passion for teaching to the subject, and takes responsibility for the creation of an environment that allows for the sharing and enjoyment of that knowledge, will be creating and effective learning climate.

B) Methods and techniques used in effective instruction of Reading 1and 2

Effective Instruction: Direct Instruction

Direct Instruction is a highly systematic instructional design technology developed at the University of Oregon over the past 35 years. Direct Instruction design has resulted in over 50 programs in:

- reading,
- reading comprehension
- spelling
- expressive writing

There are program series for both regular and special needs students.

Direct Instruction programs have shown themselves to be the single most effective remedial method in a host of studies since the 1970's with children at risk of school failure. Direct Instruction programs have been consistently ignored by the US Public Education systems despite their repeatedly consistent success with hundreds of thousands of children and adults with school problems. (For Ex: In the Hartford area, Kennelly Elementary School (USA) has taken on Direct Instruction for its reading intervention, with excellent results.)

What is Direct Instruction?

Direct instruction: approach to teaching in which lessons are goal-oriented and structured by the teacher.

Event of instruction: a model of instruction developed by Gagne that matches instructional strategies with cognitive processes involved in learning.

There are times when the most effective and efficient way to teach students is for the teacher to present information, skills, or concepts in a direct fashion. The term **direct instruction** is used to describe lessons in which the teacher transmits information directly to

students, structuring class time to reach a clearly defined set of objectives as efficiently as possible.

An enormous amount of research was done in the 1970s and early 1980s to discover the elements of effective direct instruction lessons. For example, Robert Gagne (1974, 1977, Gagne and Briggs, 1979) proposed a model based on information-processing theory in which essential **events of instruction** correspond with key events in the learning process. First, students are brought up-to-date on any skills they might need for today's lesson (for example, the teacher might briefly review yesterday's lesson if today's is a continuation) and are told what they are going to learn. The most of the lesson time is devoted to the teacher teaching the skills or information, giving students opportunities to practice the skills or express the information, and questioning or quizzing students to see whether or not they are learning the objectives.

Events of Learning and Instruction

According to Gagne, an act of learning includes eight phases. The phases are external events that can be structured by the learner or teacher. Each is paired with a process that takes place within the learner's mind. Gagne's strategy for lesson presentation suggests that teachers lead students through a series of events that have been identified as necessary for learning.

A brief description of the parts of a direct instruction lesson follows:

1. State Learning Objectives and Orient Students to Lesson: The students what they will be learning and what performance will be expected of them. Whet students' appetites for the lesson by informing them how interesting, important, or personally relevant it will be to them.

2. Review Prerequisites: Go over any skills or concepts needed to understand today's lesson.

3. Present New Material: Teach the lesson, presenting information, giving examples, demonstrating concepts, and so on.

4. Conduct Learning Probes: Pose questions to students to assess their level of understanding and correct their misconceptions.

5. Provide Independent Practice: Give students an opportunity to practice new skills or use new information on their own.

6. Assess Performance and Provide Feedback: Review independent practice work or give quiz. Give feedback on correct answers, and re-teach skills if necessary.

7. Provide Distributed Practice and Review: Assign homework to provide distributed practice on the new material. Review material in later lessons and provide practice opportunities to increase the chances that students will remember what they learned and will be able to apply it in different circumstances.

Events of Learning and Instruction

According to *Gagne* an act of learning include 8 phases. The phases (shown outside the boxes on the left) are external events that can be structured by the learner and teacher. Each is paired with a process that takes place within the learner's mind (shown inside the boxes). Gagne's strategy for lesson presentation, listed on the right, suggests that teachers lead the students through series of events that have been identified as necessary for learning.

Eight learning events		**Time**	**Eight instructional events**
Expectance	**1.** Motivation phase	⇩	**1.** Activating motivation; informing learner of the objective
Attention; selective Perception	**2.** Apprehending phase		**2.** Directing attention
Coding; Storage entry	**3.** Acquisition phase		**3.** Stimulating recall
Memory storage	**4.** Retention phase		**4.** Providing learning guidance
Retrieval	**5.** Recall phase		**5.** Enhancing retention
Transfer	**6.** Generalization phase		**6.** Promoting transfer of learning
Responding	**7.** Performance phase		**7.** Eliciting performance
Reinforcement	**8.** Feedback phase		**8.** Providing feedback

How is direct instruction lesson taught?

The general lesson structure would take vastly different forms in different subject areas and at different grade levels. Teachers of older students might take several days for each step of the

process, ending with formal test or quiz; teachers of younger students might go through the entire cycle in a class period, using informal assessments at the end.

State learning objectives

The first step in presenting lesson is planning it in such a way that the reasons for teaching and learning the lesson are clear. What do you want students to know or able to do at the end of the lesson? Setting out objectives at the beginning of the lesson is an essential step in providing a framework into which information, instructional materials, and learning activities will fit.

Planning lesson

It involves starting learning objectives; thinking through what the students will know or be able to do after the lesson; what information, activities, or experiences the teacher will provide; the time needed to reach the objective; what books, materials, and media support will be provided by the teacher; and the method(s)of instruction.

The first step of a lesson, stating learning objectives or outcomes, represents a condensation of much advance **lesson planning.** As a teacher planning a lesson, you will need at the least to meet the following requirements:

TEACHER PRESENTATION

1. State learning objective and orient students to lesson;
2. Review prerequisites;

3A. Present new material (first sub skill)

4A. Conduct learning probes (first sub skill)

3B. Present new material (second sub skill)

4B. Conduct learning probes (second sub skill)

3C. Present new material (third sub skill)

4C. Conduct learning probes (third sub skill)

5. Provide independent practice

6. Assess performance and provide feedback

7. Provide distributed practice and review

Orient students to the Lesson.

The principle task at the beginning of a lesson is to establish an attitude (or **mental set**) in students that "I'm ready to get down to work; I'm eager to learn the important information or skills the teacher is about to present, and I have a rough idea of what we will be learning."

This "set" can be established in many ways. First, it is important to expect students to be on time to class and to start the lesson immediately when the period begins (Evertson *et al., 1984*). This establishes a sense of seriousness of purpose that is lost in a ragged start.

Second, it is important to arouse students' curiosity or interest in the lesson they are about to learn (Gregory, 1975).

Humor or drama can also establish a positive mental set. One teacher occasionally used a top had and a wand to capture student interest by "magically" transforming adjectives into adverbs ("sad" into "sadly", for example). Popular and instructionally effective children's television programs use this kind of device constantly to get the attention and hold the interest of young learners in basic skills (Ball and Bogatz, 1970, 1972).

Finally, it is important in starting a lesson to give students a road map of where the lesson is going and what they will know at the end. Standing lesson objectives clearly has generally been found to enhance student achievement of those objectives (Melton, 1978). Giving students an outline of the lesson may also help them to incorporate new information (Kiewra, 1985). Telling students that the material you are about to teach will be tested can be another effective means of increasing attention to the lesson.

Theory Into Practice

Communicating Objectives to Students

Teacher education programs include training in creating lesson plans, beginning with a consideration of instructional objectives and learning outcomes. Sharing lesson plans with students is a good idea, because research suggests that knowledge of objectives can lead to improvements in student achievement. Practical suggestions follow sharing lesson objectives with students.

1. The objectives you communicate to students should be broad enough to encompass everything the lesson will teach.
2. The objectives you communicate should be specific enough in content to make clear to students what the outcomes of their learning will be—what they will know and be able to do and how they will use their new knowledge and skills.
3. Consider stating objectives both orally and in writing and repeating them during the lesson to remind students why they are learning. Teachers use verbal and written outlines or summaries of objectives. Providing demonstrations or models of learning products or outcomes is also effective.
4. Consider using questioning techniques to elicit from students their own statements of objectives or outcomes. Their input will likely reflect and inform your lesson plan.

Review Prerequisites

The next major task in a lesson is to be sure that students have mastered prerequisite skills and to link information already in their minds to the information you are about to present. If today's lesson is a continuation of yesterday's, and you are reasonably sure that students understood yesterday's lesson, then the review may just remind them about the earlier lesson and ask a few quick questions before beginning the new one.

Sometimes it is necessary to assess students on prerequisite skills before starting a lesson. Another reason to review prerequisites is to provide advance organizers.

Present New Material

Lesson Structure. Lesson should be logically organized. A lesson on the legislative branch of government might be presented as follows.

Lesson Emphasis. In addition to making clear the organization of a lesson by noting when the next subtopic is being introduced, several researchers (Petrie, 1963; Maddox and Hoole, 1975) have found that instructionally effective teachers give clear indications about the most important elements of the lesson, by saying, for example, "It is particularly important to note that . . ." Important points should be repeated and brought back into the lesson whenever appropriate.

Lesson Clarity. One consistent feature of effective lessons is clarity, the use of direct, simple, and well-organized language to present concepts. Clear presentations avoid the use of vague terms that do not add to the meaning of the lesson, such as the italicized words.

Explanations. Effective teachers have also been found to use many explanations and explanatory words (such as "because", "in order to", "consequently") and to frequently use a pattern of rule-example-rule when presenting new concepts.

Demonstrations, Models, and Illustrations. Cognitive theorists emphasize the importance of seeing and, when appropriate, having hands-on experience with concepts and skills. Visual representations are maintained in long-term memory far more readily than information that is only heard.

Maintaining Attention. Straight, dry lectures can be boring, and bored students quickly stop paying attention to even the most carefully crafted lesson. For this reason, it is important to introduce variety, activity, or humor to enliven the lecture and maintain student attention.

Content Coverage and Pacing. One of the most important factors in effective teaching is the amount of content covered. Students of teachers who cover more material learn more than other students.

Conduct Learning Probes

The term **learning probe** refers to a variety of ways of asking for brief student responses to lesson content. Learning probes give the teacher feedback on students' levels of understanding and permit students to try out their understating of a new idea to see if they have it right.

Checks for Understanding. Regardless of whether the response to the learning probes is written, physical, or oral, the purpose of the probe is what Hunter (1982) and Rosenshine and Stevens (1986) call "checking for understanding".

Questions. Questions to students in the course of the lesson serve many purposes (Carlsen, 1991). They may be used to encourage students to think further about information they learned previously or to get a discussion started.

Finally, questions can be used as learning probes. In fact, any question is to some degree a learning probe, in that the quality of response will indicate to the teacher how well students are learning the lesson. Research on the frequency of questions indicates that teachers who ask more academically relevant questions are more instructionally effective than those who ask relatively few questions related to the lesson at hand.

Wait Time. One issue regarding questioning that has received much research attention us **wait time,** the length of time the teacher waits for a students to answer a question before giving up. Research has found that teachers tend to give up too rapidly on students they perceive to be low achievers, which tells those students that the teacher expects little from them.

Teachers who wait approximately three seconds after asking a question obtain better learning results that those who give up more rapidly.

Calling Order. In asking questions, **calling order** is a concern. Anderson *et al.* (1979) found that in reading groups it was better to call on students in a prescribed order (such as around the circle) than to call on them at random, at least in part because this method ensures that all students will be called on. Calling on volunteers is perhaps the most common method, but this allows some students to avoid participating in the lesson by keeping their hands down.

Some teachers even carry around a class list on a clipboard and check off the students called upon to make sure that all get frequent chances to respond. One teacher put her students' names on cards, shuffled them before class, and used the cards to decide on whom to call.

Choral Response. Also, many researchers favor the frequent use of **choral response** when there is only one possible correct answer. This type of all-pupil response has been found to have a positive effect on students learning. The purpose of these all-students response is to give students many opportunities to respond and to give the teacher information on the entire class's level of knowledge and confidence.

Provide Independent Practice

The term **independent practice** refers to work students do in class on their own to practice or express newly learned skills or knowledge. For example, after hearing a lesson on phonics, students need an opportunity to work several equations on their own without interruptions, both to crystallize their new knowledge and to help teacher assess their knowledge. Practice is an essential step in the process of transferring new information in short-term memory to long-term memory.

Independent practice is most critical when students are learning skills, such as mathematics, reading, grammar, composition, map interpretation, or a foreign language.

Seatwork. Research on **seatwork**, or in-class independent practice, suggests that it is typically both overused and misused. Several researchers have found that student time spent receiving instruction directly from the teacher is more productive than time spent in seatwork.

Many students simply give up when they run into difficulties, while others fill out worksheets with little care for correctness. They apparently interpret the task as finishing the paper rather than learning the material.

Effective Use of Independent Practice Time. A set of recommendations for effective use of independent practice time, derived from the work of Anderson (1985), Good *et al.* (1983), and Evertson *et al.* (1984), follows.

1. *Do Not Assign Independent Practice Until You Are Sure Students Can Do It.*
2. *Keep Independent Practice Assignments Short.*
3. *Give Clear Instructions.*
4. *Get Students Started, and Then Avoid Interruptions.*
5. *Monitor Independent Work.*
6. *Collect Independent Work and Include It in Student Grades.*

Assess Performance and Provide Feedback

Every Lesson should contain an assessment of the degree to which students have mastered the objectives set for the lesson. This assessment may be done informally by questioning students, may use independent work as an assessment, or may involve a separate quiz. One way or another, however, the effectiveness of the lesson must be assessed, and the result of the assessment should be given to students as soon as possible (Brophy and Evertson, 1976; Gagne, 1978; Rosenshine, 1979). Students need to know when they are right and when they are wrong if they are to use feedback to improve their performance (see Barringer and Gholson, 1979; Meyer, 1987).

In addition to assessing the results of each lesson ,teachers need to test students from time to time on their learning of larger units of information.

Provide Distributed Practice and Review

Retention of many kinds of knowledge is increased by practice or review spaced out over time (Dempster, 1989). This has several implications for teaching. First, it implies that reviewing and recapitulating important information from earlier lessons enhances learning. However, the effects of homework are not as clear in elementary schools as they are at the secondary level

What Does Research on Direct Instruction Method Suggest?

Direct instruction methods fall into two distinct categories. One might be called "master teacher" models (following Rosenshine, 1982) because they are based on the practices of the most effective teachers. This category includes Madeline Hunter's Mastery Teaching model, the Missouri Mathematics Program, and several others.

The other category of direct instruction methods might be called "systematic instruction" models. These are based on principles similar to those behind the master teacher models, but are far more structured. Typically, they provide specific instructional materials and highly organized, systematic methods of teaching; motivating students, managing the classroom, and assessing student progress (see Rosenshine, 1986).

Madeline Hunter's Mastery Teaching

Madeline Hunter's (1982) Mastery Teaching Program provides a general guide to effective lesson in any subject area or grade level. Mastery Teaching lessons proceed in four principal steps: (1) getting students set to learn, (2) input and modeling, (3) checking understanding and guided practice, and (4) independent practice.

Theory Into Practice

Using the Hunter Method

1. *Getting Students Set to Learn:* In the first few minutes of class, complete the following three activities:

- *Review:* Ask students either to answer a few review questions orally or in writing or to summarize the previous day's lesson.
- *Anticipatory Set:* An **anticipatory set** is created students by focusing their attention on the material to be presented, reminding them of what they already know, and stimulating their interest in the lesson.
- *Objective:* State the learning objective.

2. *Input and Modeling:* Present information to students in a logical, well organized sequence, using clear language and models demonstrations. Hunter suggests "teaching to both halves of the brain" by first presenting information verbally ad then summarizing it on the chalkboard, using simple diagrams, models, and mnemonics. She also emphasizes "modeling what you mean" by giving frequent examples of concepts to make their meanings clear, moving from clear and easily understood examples (for example, "book' is a noun", "read' is a verb") to more thought-provoking examples or exceptions (for example, "In the sentence 'I went on a walk', what part of speech is the word 'walk'?")

3. *Checking Understanding and Guided Practice:* Check that all students understood the information just presented. For example, give students multiple-choice questions and have them answer using signals.

Guided practice refers to methods of giving students problems or questions one or two at a time and checking their answers immediately. The purpose of guided practice is to let students try out their new information and receive immediate feedback on their levels of understanding.

4. *Independent Practice:* After students indicate they understand the main points of the lesson, give them independent practice.

Despite its widespread popularity, evaluations of Madeline Hunter's Mastery Teaching program have not generally found that the students of teachers trained in the model have learned more than other students. A somewhat similar program was found by Stallings (1979) to improve the reading skills of students in remedial reading classes, but a second evaluation was less encouraging.

While the research on applications of "master teacher" models is mixed, most researchers agree that the main elements of these models are essential *minimum* skills that all teachers should have (for example, Gage and Needels, 1989). When studies find no differences between teachers trained in the models and other teachers, it is often because the trained teachers already had most of the direct instruction skills before the training took place!

"Systematic Instruction" Models

The principal evaluations of **systematic instruction** forms of direct instruction were studies of a program called DISTAR (now published under the names *Reading Mastery, Corrective Reading, and Distar Arithmetic* by Science Research Associates, Chicago,USA) and other methods in federally funded Follow Through programs for disadvantaged students in grades 1 to 3. In the 1970s the federal government funded a large study to find out which instructional methods were most effective increasing student achievement.

Direct Instruction: A Transactional Model

The following material has been adapted from: Caldwell, J., Huitt, W., & French, V. (1981). Research-based classroom modifications for improving student engaged time. In D. Helms, A. Graeber, J. Caldwell, & W. Huitt (Eds.). *Leader's guide for student engaged time*. Philadelphia: Research for Better Schools, Inc.

EVENT	TEACHER BEHAVIOR	STUDENT BEHAVIOR
PRESENTATION		
Overview • Review	• provides an opportunity for students to recall and/or examine what they have already learned in preparation for the current lesson	• focus on prerequisite skills and concepts • check homework and discuss difficult questions • link the lesson to previous ones • work a problem similar to those done already • review the previous lesson -- explaining what they did and why
Overview • What	• presents the specific concept(s) and skill(s) to be learned	• read a stated objective for the lesson • hear what the topic of the lesson is • see what they will be able to do at the end of a lesson
Overview • Why	• states a reason or a need for learning the skill(s) or concept(s)	• see how the lesson is related to the real world relate the lesson to their own interests • discuss how the skill or concept can be applied to other subject areas • see how the lesson relates to their deficiencies
Explanation	• develops or explains the concepts and skills to be learned	• hear an explanation • use manipulative materials to develop concepts and/or skills • have class discussions • see concrete examples • watch films or filmstrips • read explanations in textbooks • interact with Computer Assisted Instruction program
Probe & Respond	• probes students as to their initial understanding of concepts and skills	• answer teacher questions • verbalize understandings • model demonstrated processes • generate examples and non-examples of a

		concept
PRACTICE		
Guided Practice	• closely supervises the students as they begin to develop increased proficiency by completing one or two short tasks at a time	• read a paragraph aloud in a reading group • complete one or two math problems in an assignment, while the teacher monitors their work • complete an activity on the board, while others do the same • activity at their seats, and the teacher monitors the work • use structural analysis skills to orally decode new vocabulary words
Independent Practice	• allows students to work independently, with little or no teacher interaction, to reinforce individual proficiency with concepts and skills	• complete seatwork assignments • drill on basic arithmetic facts • begin or complete homework assignments • play games related to specific skills or concepts
Periodic Review	• provides students opportunity to have distributed practice on previously covered content and skills	• demonstrate retention of previously learned concepts and skills
ASSESSMENT AND EVALUATION		
Formative (Daily Success)	• checks students work each day and offers corrective instruction as necessary	• complete independent work at or above a given level of proficiency
Summative (Mastery)	• checks students work at the end of each unit of instruction	• demonstrate knowledge and application of concepts and skills at or above a given level of proficiency
MONITORING AND FEEDBACK (Provided throughout the lesson as needed)		
Cues and Prompts	• provides students with signals and reminders designed to sustain the learning activity and to hold students accountable	• attend to signals and/or reminders continue working on assigned activity

Corrective Feedback	• tells students whether their answers are correct, see or hear the correct answers, and are told why those answers are correct	• read correct answers aloud • write correct solutions to math problems on board • check spelling by comparing their answers to those on a transparency • support their answers to reading comprehension questions by reading aloud from the text

Advantages and Limitations of Direct Instruction

It is clear that direct instruction methods can improve the teaching of certain basic skills, but it is equally clear that there is much yet to be learned about how and for what purposes they should be used. The prescriptions derived from studies of effective teachers cannot be uncritically applied in the classroom and expected to make a substantial difference in student achievement. Structured, systematic instructional programs based on these prescriptions can markedly improve students' achievement in basic skills. But it is important to remember hat the research on direct instruction done up to now has mostly focused on basic reading and mathematics, mostly in the elementary grades. For other subject and at other grade level we have less of a basis for believing that direct instruction methods will improve student learning.

Summary of Principles of Direct Instruction

- **More teacher-directed instruction**
    - (> 50%) and less seatwork (< 50%).
- **Active presentation of information (could be by teacher, computer, another student).**
    - Gain students' attention

- Providing motivational clues
- Use advance organizers
- Expose essential content
- Pretesting/prompting of relevant knowledge

- **Clear organization of presentation.**
  - component relationships
  - sequential relationships
  - relevance relationships
  - transitional relationships

Effective instruction: cooperative learning

How Is Cooperative Learning Used in Instruction?

Cooperative learning refers to instructional methods in which students work together in small groups to help each other learn. There are many quite different approaches to cooperative learning. Most involve students in four-member, mixed-ability groups (*e.g.,* Slavin, 1990b), but some methods use dyads and some use varying group sizes. Typically, students are assigned to cooperative groups and stay together as a group for many weeks or months. They are usually taught specific skills to help them work well together: active listening, giving good explanations, avoiding putdowns, including others, and so on. Cooperative learning activities can play many roles in lessons.

Students Teams Achievement Divisions (STAD)

An effective cooperative learning method is called **Students Teams Achievement Divisions,** or **STAD** (Slavin, 1986a, 1990b). STAD consists of a regular cycle of teaching, cooperative study in mixed-ability teams, and quizzes, with recognition or other rewards provided to teams whose members most exceed their own past records.

STAD consists of a regular cycle of instructional activities, as follows:

- *Teach:* Present the lesson.
- *Team Study:* Students work on worksheets in their teams to master the material.
- *Test:* Students take individual quizzes.
- *Team Recognition:* Team scores are computed on the basis of team members' improvement scores, and certificates, a class newsletter, or a bulletin board recognizes high-scoring teams.

I would like to mention the characteristics of effective teams. The following are eight characteristics of effective teams which were identified by Larson and LaFasto in their book titled *Teamwork: What Must Go Right/What Can Go Wrong* (Sage Publications 1989).

1. **The team must have a clear goal.** Avoid fuzzy, motherhood statements. Team goals should call for a specific performance objective, expressed so concisely that everyone knows when the objective has been met.
2. **The team must have a results-driven structure.** The team should be allowed to operate in a manner that produces results. It is often best to allow the team to develop the structure.
3. **The team must have competent team members.** In the education setting this can be taking to mean that the problem given to the team should be one that the members can tackle given their level of knowledge.
4. **The team must have unified commitment.** This doesn't mean that team members must agree on everything. It means that all individuals must be directing their efforts towards the goal. If an individual's efforts are going purely towards personal goals, then the team will confront this and resolve the problem.

5. **The team must have a collaborative climate.** It is a climate of trust produced by honest, open, consistent and respectful behavior. With this climate teams perform well...without it, they fail.
6. **The team must have high standards that are understood by all.** Team members must know what is expected of them individually and collectively. Vague statements such as "positive attitude" and "demonstrated effort" are not good enough.
7. **The team must receive external support and encouragement.** Encouragement and praise works just as well in motivating teams as it does with individuals.
8. **The team must have principled leadership**. Teams usually need someone to lead the effort. Team members must know that the team leader has the position because they have good leadership skills and are working for the good of the team. The team members will be less supportive if they feel that the team leader is putting him/her above the team, achieving personal recognition or otherwise benefiting from the position.

Stages of Team Growth

It is important for teacher and students (the team members) to know that teams do not just form and immediately start working together to accomplish great things. There are actually stages of team growth and teams must be given time to work through the stages and become effective. Team growth can be separated into four stages.

Stage 1: Forming. When a team is forming, members cautiously explore the boundaries of acceptable group behavior. They search for their position within the group and test the leader's guidance. It is normal for little team progress to occur during this stage.

Stage 2: Storming. Storming is probably the most difficult stage for the group. Members often become impatient about the lack of progress, but are still inexperienced with working as a

team. Members may argue about the actions they should take because they faced with ideas that are unfamiliar to them and put them outside their comfort zones. Much of their energy is focused on each other instead of achieving the goal.

Stage 3. Norming. During this stage team members accept the team and begin to reconcile differences. Emotional conflict is reduced as relationships become more cooperative. The team is able to concentrate more on their work and start to make significant progress.

Stage 4. Performing. By this stage the team members have discovered and accepted each other's strengths and weaknesses, and learned what their roles are. Members are open and trusting and many good ideas are produced because they are not afraid to offer ideas and suggestions. They are comfortable using decision making tools to evaluate the ideas, prioritize tasks and solve problems. Much is accomplished and team satisfaction and loyalty is high.

Since working as part of a team can improve learning and is a much needed skill in today's workplace, some team exercises should be included in the classroom. With well planned out tasks, careful guidance, and close observation, instructors can make team exercises extremely valuable learning experiences.

Research on Cooperative Learning

Cooperative (or Collaborative**) learning** is defined as groups working together for a common purpose

Research has focused primarily on group study methods, such as Student Teams Achievement Divisions, or STAD (Slavin, 1986). The research finds that students learn substantially more in cooperative learning than traditional instruction if two conditions are met. First, there must be some regard or recognition provided to students, such as certificates or small privileges for groups that do well. Second, the success of the group must depend on the *individual* learning of each group member, not on a single group product. That is, groups must

ultimately be workers or the loudest members. When these conditions are fulfilled, cooperative learning has been effective in grades 2 through 12, in every subject, and in many types of schools (See Slavin, 1990b, 1991). Cooperative learning methods built around discussion (Johnson and Johnson, 1979) and around group projects (Sharan and Schachar, 1988) have also been effective. In addition to achievement, cooperative learning methods have had positive effects on such outcomes as race relations (Slavin, 1985 a,b,c), self-esteem, attitudes toward school, and acceptance of main streamed children with special education needs (Slavin, 1990b).

How Are Discussions Used In Instruction?

Subjective and Controversial Subjects. Such subjects as history, government, economics, literature, art, and music contain many issues that lend themselves to discussion because there are no single right answers.

Difficult and Novel Concepts. The second category that lends itself to discussion are objectives that do contain single right answers but involve difficult concepts that force students to see something in a different way. ("Things float because they are light", "If things float because they are light, then why does a battleship float?" and "If you threw some things in a lake, they would sink part way but not to the bottom—why would they stop sinking?")

Affective Objectives. For example, in a course on civics or government there is much information to be taught about how our government works, but there are also important values to be transmitted, such as civic duty and patriotism. A teacher could teach "six reasons why it is important to vote," but the real objective here is not to teach reasons for voting, but rather to instill respect for the democratic process and a commitment to register and vote when the time comes.

Whole-Class Discussion

What differentiates a **whole-class discussion** from a usual lesson is that in discussions the teacher plays a less dominant role. Teachers may guide the discussion and help the class avoid dead ends, but the ideas should be drawn from the students.

Inquiry Training. The teacher knows the answers to the questions at hand ("How does a light bulb work?"), but wants the students to find out for themselves. The teacher using a particular strategy called **inquiry training**, in which students are presented with a puzzling event or experiment and must try out theories to explain what happened.

Exploring Points of View.

Information Before Discussion. Before beginning a discussion it is important to make sure that students have an adequate knowledge base.

Small-Group Discussions

In a **small-group discussion** students work in four-to-six-member groups to discuss a particular topic. Because small-group discussions require that students work independently of the teacher most of the time, young or poorly organized students need a great deal of preparation and, in fact, may not be able to benefit from them at all. However, most students at or above the fourth grade can profit from small-group discussions.

How Do Humanistic Approaches Differ From Direct Instruction?

Educational psychology has always had two principal schools of thought. One focuses primarily on the role of education in increasing students' knowledge and skills. This movement currently goes under the name of "direct instruction". The other is more focused on the affective outcomes of teaching, learning how to learn, and enhancing creativity and human potential. This is called the **humanistic education** movement, and it was a dominant force in American education in the 1960s and 1970s, and is making a substantial resurgence in the 1990s.

Self-Regulated Learning. The idea is to make students self-directed, self-motivated learners rather than passive recipients of information. The motivational benefits of students' abilities to choose their own activities have been demonstrated.

Affective Education.

"Authentic" Assessment. Another characteristic of humanistic education is the avoidance of grades, standardized testing, and most other formal methods of evaluation. Humanistic educators often recommend using written evaluations, "authentic" evaluations (such as solving real problems or conducting experiments), or no evaluations at all.

Self Motivation. Another principle of humanistic education is that education should teach students how to learn and to value learning for its own sake. All educators hope that students will develop positive attitudes toward learning and will be able to use various resources to obtain information.

Open Schools

The instructional programs most closely associated with the humanistic education movement of the early 1970s are called **open schools** or "open classrooms". Often the classrooms have no walls.

Open classrooms typically use **learning stations**, areas located around the room that contain projects, individualized workbooks or units, or other activities. Reviews of studies of open versus traditional educational have uniformly concluded that the effects of open-education programs did not support the early enthusiasm for them.

Constructivist Approaches to Humanistic Education

The focus of modern approaches to humanistic education is different in many ways from the open classroom movement of the 1970s. Modern approaches put a much greater emphasis on the role of the teacher in guiding discovery and on the use of cooperative learning and discussion among students. They are largely based on constructivist theories of learning,

which emphasize the need for students to construct meaning for themselves. They emphasize **authentic learning** activities, learning exercises that resemble the real-life activities for which students are being prepared (Brophy, 1992). For example, whole-language approaches to reading instruction emphasize the use of real literature rather than basal texts, the integration of reading with writing and language arts, student responsibility and choice, and other elements that promote the teaching of reading as meaning rather that as a skill (see Goodman, 1986; Watson, 1989). Writing process models emphasize teaching of composition by having students plan, draft, revise, edit, and ultimately "publish" composition for a real audience, with help and feedback from classmates as well as the teacher at each stage (Calkins, 1983; Graves, 1983). New approaches in mathematics instruction emphasize not only teaching **of** problem solving, but teaching **through** problem solving as well, where students are guided to discover mathematical processes and operations rather than being directly taught (see Lampert, 1986; Burns, 1986).

Humanistic Education versus Direct Instruction

Which is better, humanistic education or direct instruction? In a way, this is like asking which is a better way to travel, by walking or by swimming. Obviously, walking is better where it is called for (on land) and swimming is better where it is called for (in water). By the same token, direct instruction with clear learning objectives and structured instructional strategies that achieve these objectives is best for teaching well-specified skills that students must master. More humanistic methods are probably most appropriate when the goal is less to teach a particular set of skills or body of knowledge than to teach ways of approaching problems, appreciation of a subject, and openness to different viewpoints.

However, there should not be sharp boundaries between humanistic and direct approaches (Kierstead, 1985). Every teacher must be skilled in both. Ms. Logan, in the scenario opening this chapter, used discovery, cooperative learning, discussion, and other "humanistic" approaches, but also taught a direct instruction lesson. A math teacher might use direct

instructional strategies to teach students how to compute rates, but might then have students use stopwatches to time runners or to predict when two toy cars moving at different speeds will crash. If there is one thing research in educational psychology (and particularly in direct instruction) tells us, it is that students learn what they are taught. If we expect students to be independent learners, we must give them opportunities to learn on their own. If we expect students to value learning for its own sake, we must give them exciting and challenging experiences. If we want them to learn to take responsibility, we must give them responsibility.

Teaching effective learning strategies: cognitive theories

1. Constructivist Approaches

What is the Constructivist View of Learning?

Constructivist theories of learning: state that learners must individually discover and transform complex information, checking new information against old rules and revising them when they no longer work.

One of the most important principles of educational psychology is that teachers cannot simply give students knowledge. Students must construct knowledge in their own minds.

The premises of constructivism

- Sentences are constructed, not transmitted
- Prior knowledge impacts the learning
- Initial understanding is local, not global, i.e. no associations with global knowledge yet
- Building useful knowledge structures requires further effortful and purposeful activity

Historical roots of Constructivism.

The constructivist revolution has deep roots in the history of education. It draws heavily on the work of Piaget and Vygotsky (recall Chapter 2), both of whom emphasized` that cognitive change only take place when previous conceptions go through a process of **disequilibration** in light of new information.

Piaget and Vygotsky also emphasized the **social nature of learning** and both suggested the use of mixed-ability learning groups to promote conceptual change.

Top-Down Processing. Constructivism approaches to teaching emphasize top-down rather than bottom-up instruction. "Top-down" means that **students begin with complex problems to solve and then work out or discover** (with the teacher's guidance) the basic skills required. For example, students might be asked **to write compositions and only later learn about spelling, grammar, and punctuation.**

This **top-down processing** approach is contrasted with the traditional **bottom-up** strategy in which basic skills are gradually built into more complex skills.

Constructivist approaches emphasizing discovery, experimentation, and opened problems have been successfully applied in mathematics and in other subjects.

Generative Learning. Many of the teaching strategies used in constructivist approaches to teaching fall under the heading of **generative learning** (Wittrock, 1986). A central assumption of constructivist approaches is that **all learning is "discovered"; even if we tell students something, they must perform mental operations with the information to make it their own**.

What Are Some Instructional Models Based on Constructivist Principles?

1. Discovery learning,

2. Reception learning, and

3. Assisted learning, or scaffolding, are three influential instructional models based on cognitive views of learning and constructivist principles.

2. Discovery Learning

One of the most influential cognitive instructional models is **Jerome Bruner's** (1966) **discovery learning**, in which students are encouraged to learn on their own. Students learn through active involvement with concepts and principles, and teachers encourage students to have experiences and conduct experiments that permit them to discover principles for themselves.

3. Reception Learning

David Ausubel (1968) argues that students do not always know what is important or relevant and that many students need external motivation to do the cognitive work necessary to learn what is taught in school.

Ausubel described an alternative model of instruction, called **reception learning.** Reception theorists suggest that **the teacher is to structure the learning situation, to select materials that are appropriate for students, and then to present them in well-organized lessons that progress from general ideas to specific details.** At the core of Ausubel's approach is what he calls **expository teaching,** which is teacher-planned, systematic instruction on meaningful information.

Expository teaching consists of three principal stages of lesson presentation (Joyce and Weil, 1986).

Phase One: Presentation of Advanced Organizer: The advance organizer relates the ideas to be presented in a lesson to information already in students' minds and provides a broad organizational scheme for the more specific information to be presented.

Phrase Two: Presentation of Learning Task or Material: In the second part of the lesson the new material is presented by means of lectures, discussions, films, or student tasks.

Phase Three: Strengthening Cognitive Organization: In the third phase of the lesson Ausubel suggests that the teacher try to tie the new information into the structure laid out at the beginning of the lesson, by reminding students of how each specific detail relates to the big picture.

4. Expository Teaching in the Classroom

There are a number of practical issues that are central to expository teaching. This suggests that materials should be organized so that general ideas are presented before specific facts and detail. Advance organizers can help encourage this process of focusing on increasingly smaller details. To do this, each organizer should be more specific than the one before.

5. Scaffolding - is a practice based on Vygotsky's concept of **assisted learning**. According to Vygotsky, higher mental functions, including the ability to direct memory and attention in a purposeful way and to think in symbols, are mediated behaviors. Mediated

externally by culture, these and other behaviors become internalized in the learner's mind as psychological tools.

How Do Metacognitive Skills Help Students Learn?

The term **metacognition** means knowledge about one's own learning or **knowing how to learn.** Thinking skills and study skills are examples of **metacognitive skills.** Students can be taught strategies for assessing their own understanding, figuring out how much time they will need to study something, and choosing an effective plan of attack to study or solve problems.

Reciprocal Teaching

One well-researched example of a constructivist approach based on principles of question-generation is **reciprocal teaching** (Palincsar and Brown, 1984). This approach designed primarily to help low achievers learn reading comprehension, involves the teacher working with small groups of students.

Making Learning Relevant/Activating Prior Knowledge

Advance Organizer. David Ausubel (1960, 1963) developed a means called **advance organizers** to orient students to material they were about to learn and to help them recall related information that could be used to assist in incorporating the new information. An advance organizer is an initial statement about a subject to be learned that provides a structure for the new information and relates it to information students already process.

Analogies. Like advance organizers, use of explanatory **analogies** can contribute to an understanding of the lessons or the text. For example, a teacher could introduce a lesson on the human body's disease-fighting mechanism by telling students to imagine a battle and to consider it as an analogy for the body's fight against infection.

Elaborations Cognitive psychologists use the term **elaboration** to refer to the process of thinking about material to be learned in a way that connects the material to information or ideas already in the learner's mind.

The principle that elaborated information is easier to understand and remember can be applied to helping students comprehend lessons. Students may be asked to think of connections between ideas or to relate new concepts to their own lives.

How are you reading a book? Are you underlining or highlighting key sentences? Are you taking notes or summarizing? Are you discussing the main ideas with a classmate? Are you putting the book under your pillow at night and hoping the information will somehow seep into your mind? These and many other strategies have been used by students since the invention of reading and have been studied almost as long; even Aristotle wrote on the topic. Yet educational psychologists are still debating which study strategies are most effective.

Thomas and Rohwer (1986) have proposed a set of principles if effective studying that apply across particular study methods. These are as follows:

- **Specificity**: Study strategies must be appropriate to the learning objectives and the types of students with whom they are used.
- **Generativity**: One of the most important principles of effective study strategies is that they should involve reworking the material studies, generating something new.

Effective Monitoring: The principle of effective monitoring simply means that students should know how and when to apply their study strategies and how to tell if they are working for them.

Personal Efficacy: Students must have a clear sense that studying will pay off for them if they are to work hard at it.

Note Taking

One apparently effective means of increasing the value of students' note taking is for the teacher to provide "skeletal" notes before a lecture or reading, giving students categories to direct their own note taking. Several studies have found that this practice, combined with student note taking and review, increases student learning (Kiewra, 1991).

- ✓ Underlining
- ✓ Summarizing
- ✓ Outlining and Mapping

A related family of study strategies the student to represent the material studied in skeletal form. Outlining presents the main points of the material in a hierarchical format, with each detail organized under a higher-level category. In networking and mapping, students identify main ideas and then diagram connections between them.

Cooperative Scripting.

A study method in which students work in pairs and take turns orally summarizing sections of material to be learned.

Many students find it helpful to get together with classmates to discuss material they have read or heard in class. A formalization of this age-old practice has been researched by Dansereau and his colleagues (1985). In it, students work in pairs and take turns summarizing sections of the material for one another. While one student summarizes, the other listens and corrects any errors or omissions. Then the two students switch roles, continuing in this way until they have covered all the material to be learned. A series of studies of this **cooperative scripts** method has consistently found that students who study this way learn and retain far more than students who summarize on their own or who simply read the material.

One of the best known study techniques for helping students understand and remember what they read is a procedure called the **PQ4R Method** (Thomas and Robinson, 1972). The acronym means Preview, Questions, Read, Reflect, Recite and Review.

Research has shown the effectiveness of the PQ4R method for older children (Adams *et al.,* 1972), and the reason seem clear. Following the PQ4R procedure focuses students on the meaningful organization of information and involves students in other effective strategies, such as question generation, elaboration, and "distributed practice", opportunities to review information over a period of time (Anderson, 1990)

Teaching the PQ4R Method

Explain and model the steps of the PQ4R method for your older students, using the following guidelines.

- **Preview**: *Survey* or *scan* the material quickly to get an idea of the general organization and major topics and subtopics. Pay attention to headings and subheadings, and identify what you will be reading about and studying.
- **Question**: Ask yourself questions about the material as you read it. Use headings to invent questions using the "wh" words: who, what, why, where.
- **Read**: Read the material. Do not take extensive written notes. Try to answer the questions you posed while reading.
- **Reflect** on the Material: Try to understand and make meaningful the presented information by (1) relating it to things you already know; (2) relating the subtopics in the text to primary concepts or principles; (3) trying to resolve contradictions within the presented information; and (4) trying to use the material to solve simulated problems suggested by the material.
- **Recite**: Practice remembering the information by stating points out loud and asking and answering questions. You may use headings, highlighted words, and notes on major ideas to generate those questions.

- **Review**: In the final step actively review the material, focusing on asking yourself questions and rereading the material only when you are not sure of the answer.

How Do Students Learn and Transfer Concepts?

Much meaningful learning involves the learning of **concepts**.

- A concept is a category under which specific elements may be grouped. For example, a red ball, a red pencil, and a red chair are all instances of the simple concept "red".

Concept Learning and Teaching

Concepts are generally learned in one of two ways. Most concepts that we learn outside of school we learn by observation. For example, a child learns the concept "car" by hearing certain vehicles referred to as a "car". Initially, the child might include pickup trucks or motorcycles under the concept "car", but as time goes on, the concept is refined until the child can clearly differentiate "car" from "non-car". Similarly, the child learns the more difficult concepts "naughty", "clean", or "fun" by observation and experience.

Definitions. Just as concepts can be learned in two ways, so can they be taught in to ways? Students may be given instances and non instances of a concept and later asked to derive or infer a definition. For most concepts taught in school, it makes most sense to state a definition, present several instances (and non instances, if appropriate), and then restate the definition, showing how the instances typify the definition. Use of this pattern, called **rule-example-rule,** has been found to be characteristic of instructionally effective teachers.

Teaching for Transfer of Learning

"Real-Life" Learning. Some principles of **transfer of learning** is related to *generalization*.

Essentially, transfer of learning from one situation to another depends on the degree to which the information or skills were learned in the original situation, and on the degree of similarity between the situation in which the skill or concept was learned and the situation to which it is to be applied.

Learning in Context. If transfer of learning depends in large part on similarity between the situation in which information is learned and that in which it is applied, then how can we teach in the school setting so that students will be able to apply their knowledge in the very different setting of real life?

For example, a few weeks' experience as a parking attendant, driving all sorts of cars, would probably be better than years of experience driving one kind of car for enabling a person to drive a completely new and different car (at least in a parking lot!).

Feedback. Provide practice with feedback. Perhaps the most effective way to teach problem solving is to provide students with a great deal of practice on a wide variety of problem types, giving feedback not only on the correctness of their solutions but also on the process by which they arrived at the solutions.

Teaching Thinking Skills

The most widely known and extensively researched of several thinking-skills programs currently in use was developed by an Israeli educator, Reuven Feuerstein (1980). In this program, called **Instrumental Enrichment,** students work trough a series of paper-and-pencil exercise intended to build such intellectual skills as categorization, comparison, orientation in space, and numerical progression.

Many reviewers of the research on Instrumental Enrichment have suggested that this method is simply teaching students how to take IQ tests rather than teaching them anything of real value.

Critical Thinking

One key objective of schooling is enhancing students' abilities to think critically, to make rational decisions about what to do or what to believe (Hitchcock, 1983; Ennis, 1989). Examples of **critical thinking** include identifying misleading advertisements, weighing competing evidence, and identifying assumptions or fallacies in arguments.

As with any other objective, learning to think critically requires practice—students can be given many dilemmas, logical and illogical arguments, valid and misleading advertisements, and so on (Norris, 1985).

Effective teaching of critical thinking depends on setting a classroom tone that encourages the acceptance of divergent perspectives and free discussion.

The summary of Principles of Constructivist Approach

So:

In what way is a constructivist view of teaching English different from other views?

The answer lies in the tenets/principles of constructivist *philosophy,* which assert that all knowledge is constructed as a result of cognitive processes within the human mind.

But:

It has a limited applicability in spelling and pronunciation

Chapter II

Practical guidelines for the effective Reading 1-2 Instructions

a) Reading Purpose and Reading Comprehension

In the late 1920s people concerned with education began to realize that few students spoke any foreign language correctly and fluently upon living high school or even college. Educators recommended that reading skill should be emphasized (both intensive and extensive) and that only the grammatical structures found in reading selections be presents, primary to ensure recognition. Readers containing simplified and adapted or original stories were used. If the books selected were interesting and at the appropriate level, many students derived a positive feeling of achievement from the reading methods.

Traditionally, the purpose of learning to read in a language has been to have access to the literature written in that language. In language instruction, reading materials have traditionally been chosen from literary texts that represent "higher" forms of culture.

This approach assumes that students learn to read a language by studying its vocabulary, grammar, and sentence structure, not by actually reading it. In this approach, lower level learners read only sentences and paragraphs generated by textbook writers and instructors. The reading of authentic materials is limited to the works of great authors and reserved for upper level students who have developed the language skills needed to read them.

The communicative approach to language teaching has given instructors a different understanding of the role of reading in the language classroom and the types of texts that can be used in instruction. When the goal of instruction is communicative competence, everyday materials such as train schedules, newspaper articles, and travel and tourism Web sites become appropriate classroom materials, because reading them is one way communicative competence is developed. Instruction in reading and reading practice thus become essential parts of language teaching at every level.

Reading Purpose and Reading Comprehension

Reading is an activity with a purpose. A person may read in order to gain information or verify existing knowledge, or in order to critique a writer's ideas or writing style. A person may also read for enjoyment, or to enhance knowledge of the language being read. The purpose(s) for reading guide the reader's selection of texts.

The purpose for reading also determines the appropriate approach to reading comprehension. A person who needs to know whether she can afford to eat at a particular restaurant needs to comprehend the information provided on the menu, but does not need to recognize the name of every appetizer listed. A person reading poetry for enjoyment needs to recognize the words the poet uses and the ways they are put together, but does not need to identify main idea and supporting details. However, a person using a scientific article to support an opinion needs to know the vocabulary that is used, understand the facts and cause-effect sequences that are presented, and recognize ideas that are presented as hypotheses and givens.

Reading research shows that good readers

- Read extensively
- Integrate information in the text with existing knowledge
- Have a flexible reading style, depending on what they are reading
- Are motivated
- Rely on different skills interacting: perceptual processing, phonemic processing, recall
- Read for a purpose; reading serves a function

Reading as a Process

Reading is an interactive process that goes on between the reader and the text, resulting in comprehension. The text presents letters, words, sentences, and paragraphs that encode meaning. The reader uses knowledge, skills, and strategies to determine what that meaning is. Reader knowledge, skills, and strategies include

- Linguistic competence: the ability to recognize the elements of the writing system; knowledge of vocabulary; knowledge of how words are structured into sentences
- Discourse competence: knowledge of discourse markers and how they connect parts of the text to one another
- Sociolinguistic competence: knowledge about different types of texts and their usual structure and content
- Strategic competence: the ability to use top-down strategies, as well as knowledge of the language (a bottom-up strategy)

The purpose for reading and the type of text determine the specific knowledge, skills, and strategies that readers need to apply to achieve comprehension. Reading comprehension is thus much more than decoding. A reading comprehension result when the reader knows which skills and strategies are appropriate for the type of text, and understand how to apply them to accomplish the reading purpose.

b) Strategies for the development of reading 1-2 skills in the university environment

Using Reading Strategies

Language instructors are often frustrated by the fact that students do not automatically transfer the strategies they use when reading in their native language to reading in a language they are learning. Instead, they seem to think reading means starting at the beginning and going word by word, stopping to look up every unknown vocabulary item, until they reach the end. When they do this, students are relying exclusively on their linguistic knowledge, a bottom-up strategy. One of the most important functions of the language instructor, then, is to help students move past this idea and use top-down strategies as they do in their native language.

Effective language instructors show students how they can adjust their reading behavior to deal with a variety of situations, types of input, and reading purposes. They help students develop a set of reading strategies and match appropriate strategies to each reading situation. Strategies that can help students read more quickly and effectively include

- **Previewing**: reviewing titles, section headings, and photo captions to get a sense of the structure and content of a reading selection
- **Predicting**: using knowledge of the subject matter to make predictions about content and vocabulary and check comprehension; using knowledge of the text type and purpose to make predictions about discourse structure; using knowledge about the author to make predictions about writing style, vocabulary, and content
- **Skimming** and **scanning**: using a quick survey of the text to get the main idea, identify text structure, confirm or question predictions
- **Guessing** from context: using prior knowledge of the subject and the ideas in the text as clues to the meanings of unknown words, instead of stopping to look them up

- **Paraphrasing**: stopping at the end of a section to check comprehension by restating the information and ideas in the text

Instructors can help students learn when and how to use reading strategies in several ways.

- By modeling the strategies aloud, talking through the processes of previewing, predicting, skimming and scanning, and paraphrasing. This shows students how the strategies work and how much they can know about a text before they begin to read word by word.
- By allowing time in class for group and individual previewing and predicting activities as preparation for in-class or out-of-class reading. Allocating class time to these activities indicates their importance and value.
- By using cloze (fill in the blank) exercises to review vocabulary items. This helps students learn to guess meaning from context.
- By encouraging students to talk about what strategies they think will help them approach a reading assignment, and then talking after reading about what strategies they actually used. This helps students develop flexibility in their choice of strategies.

When language learners use reading strategies, they find that they can control the reading experience, and they gain confidence in their ability to read the language.

Specific Strategies for studying and learning from text

In this section I would like to focus on some reading strategies I find particularly useful for Level 1 and level 2 students.

PARS

This reading strategy developed by Smith and Elliot (1979) is efficient for students with limited prior experience in using study-reading techniques. The following four steps are included:

1. ***Preview*** the material to better understand its organization, that is, its important headings or concepts.
2. ***Ask questions*** before reading to help you understand the purpose or purposes inherent in your reading.
3. ***Read*** with those purpose-setting questions as a guide.
4. ***Summarize*** the reading by analyzing information gained against your questions.

K-W-L

This teaching strategy developed by Ogle (1986) is designed to facilitate the students' abilities to activate prior knowledge when interacting with text, and to increase their level of interest in reading and studying about selected topics. The three steps in this strategy are as follows:

1. ***K - What I know.*** The students collaboratively answer to a concept presented by the instructor before they read a text. Instructor records their ideas in order to use them as a beginning point for discussion.
2. ***W – What do I want to learn?*** Students develop questions that highlight their area of interest as a result of their activities in the first step. Students then read the selection.
3. ***L – What I learned.*** After completing the text selection, students list what they have learned, check this against their questions, and answer any remaining questions.

SIP

Dana (1989) developed this strategy. The aim of this strategy is to help readers concentrate their attention on content while reading. It is effective with both narrative and expository texts. The three steps for SIP are as follows:

1. ***Summarize*** the content of each page, or naturally divided section, of the text. This enable students to reflect on and interact with the text more effectively.
2. ***Imaging*** reminds the students to try to form an internal visual display of content encountered while reading. It also provides a second imprint of the text's content but is economical because it adds no time to the reading task.
3. ***Predict*** while reading. Students should pose after each page or naturally divided section in the text, reflect on the text, and predict what might happen next.

Reading to Learn

Reading is an essential part of language instruction at every level because it supports learning in multiple ways.

- Reading to learn the language: Reading material is language input. By giving students a variety of materials to read, instructors provide multiple opportunities for students to absorb vocabulary, grammar, sentence structure, and discourse structure as they occur in authentic contexts. Students thus gain a more complete picture of the ways in which the elements of the language work together to convey meaning.
- Reading for content information: Students' purpose for reading in their native language is often to obtain information about a subject they are studying, and this purpose can be useful in the language learning classroom as well. Reading for content information in the language classroom gives students both authentic reading material and an authentic purpose for reading.
- Reading for cultural knowledge and awareness: Reading everyday materials that are designed for native speakers can give students insight into the lifestyles and worldviews of the people whose language they are studying. When students have access to newspapers, magazines, and Web sites, they are exposed to culture in all its variety, and monolithic cultural stereotypes begin to break down.

When reading to learn, students need to follow four basic steps:

1. Figure out the purpose for reading. Activate background knowledge of the topic in order to predict or anticipate content and identify appropriate reading strategies.
2. Attend to the parts of the text that are relevant to the identified purpose and ignore the rest. This selectivity enables students to focus on specific items in the input and reduces the amount of information they have to hold in short-term memory.
3. Select strategies that are appropriate to the reading task and use them flexibly and interactively. Students' comprehension improves and their confidence increases when they use top-down and bottom-up skills simultaneously to construct meaning.
4. Check comprehension while reading and when the reading task is completed. Monitoring comprehension helps students detect inconsistencies and comprehension failures, helping them learn to use alternate strategies.

Goals and Techniques for Teaching Reading

Instructors want to produce students who, even if they do not have complete control of the grammar or an extensive lexicon, can fend for themselves in communication situations. In the case of reading, this means producing students who can use reading strategies to maximize their comprehension of text, identify relevant and non-relevant information, and tolerate less than word-by-word comprehension.

Focus: The Reading Process

To accomplish this goal, instructors focus on the process of reading rather than on its product.

- They develop students' awareness of the reading process and reading strategies by asking students to think and talk about how they read in their native language.

- They allow students to practice the full repertoire of reading strategies by using authentic reading tasks. They encourage students to read to learn (and have an authentic purpose for reading) by giving students some choice of reading material.
- When working with reading tasks in class, they show students the strategies that will work best for the reading purpose and the type of text. They explain how and why students should use the strategies.
- They have students practice reading strategies in class and ask them to practice outside of class in their reading assignments. They encourage students to be conscious of what they're doing while they complete reading assignments.
- They encourage students to evaluate their comprehension and self-report their use of strategies. They build comprehension checks into in-class and out-of-class reading assignments, and periodically review how and when to use particular strategies.
- They encourage the development of reading skills and the use of reading strategies by using the target language to convey instructions and course-related information in written form: office hours, homework assignments, and test content.
- They do not assume that students will transfer strategy use from one task to another. They explicitly mention how a particular strategy can be used in a different type of reading task or with another skill.

By raising students' awareness of reading as a skill that requires active engagement, and by explicitly teaching reading strategies, instructors help their students develop both the ability and the confidence to handle communication situations they may encounter beyond the classroom. In this way they give their students the foundation for communicative competence in the new language.

Integrating Reading Strategies

Instruction in reading strategies is not an add-on, but rather an integral part of the use of reading activities in the language classroom. Instructors can help their students become effective readers by teaching them how to use strategies before, during, and after reading.

Before reading: Plan for the reading task

- Set a purpose or decide in advance what to read for
- Decide if more linguistic or background knowledge is needed
- Determine whether to enter the text from the top down (attend to the overall meaning) or from the bottom up (focus on the words and phrases)

During and after reading: Monitor comprehension

- Verify predictions and check for inaccurate guesses
- Decide what is and is not important to understand
- Reread to check comprehension
- Ask for help

After reading: Evaluate comprehension and strategy use

- Evaluate comprehension in a particular task or area
- Evaluate overall progress in reading and in particular types of reading tasks
- Decide if the strategies used were appropriate for the purpose and for the task
- Modify strategies if necessary

Using Authentic Materials and Approaches

For students to develop communicative competence in reading, classroom and homework reading activities must resemble (or be) real-life reading tasks that involve meaningful communication. They must therefore be authentic in three ways.

1. The reading material must be authentic: It must be the kind of material that students will need and want to be able to read when traveling, studying abroad, or using the language in other contexts outside the classroom.

When selecting texts for student assignments, remember that the difficulty of a reading text is less a function of the language, and more a function of the conceptual difficulty and the task(s) that students are expected to complete. Simplifying a text by changing the language often removes natural redundancy and makes the organization somewhat difficult for students to predict. This actually makes a text more difficult to read than if the original were used.

Rather than simplifying a text by changing its language, make it more approachable by eliciting students' existing knowledge in pre-reading discussion, reviewing new vocabulary before reading, and asking students to perform tasks that are within their competence, such as skimming to get the main idea or scanning for specific information, before they begin intensive reading.

2. The reading purpose must be authentic: Students must be reading for reasons that make sense and have relevance to them. "Because the teacher assigned it" is not an authentic reason for reading a text.

To identify relevant reading purposes, ask students how they plan to use the language they are learning and what topics they are interested in reading and learning about. Give them opportunities to choose their reading assignments, and encourage them to use the library, the Internet, and foreign language newsstands and bookstores to find other things they would like to read.

3. The reading approach must be authentic: Students should read the text in a way that matches the reading purpose, the type of text, and the way people normally read. This means that reading aloud will take place only in situations where it would take place outside the classroom, such as reading for pleasure. The majority of students' reading should be done silently.

Reading Aloud in the Classroom

Students do not learn to read by reading aloud. A person who reads aloud and comprehends the meaning of the text is coordinating word recognition with comprehension and speaking and pronunciation ability in highly complex ways. Students whose language skills are limited are not able to process at this level, and end up having to drop one or more of the elements. Usually the dropped element is comprehension, and reading aloud becomes word calling: simply pronouncing a series of words without regard for the meaning they carry individually and together. Word calling is not productive for the student who is doing it, and it is boring for other students to listen to.

- There are two ways to use reading aloud productively in the language classroom. Read aloud to your students as they follow along silently. You have the ability to use inflection and tone to help them hear what the text is saying. Following along as you read will help students move from word-by-word reading to reading in phrases and thought units, as they do in their first language.
- Use the "read and look up" technique. With this technique, a student reads a phrase or sentence silently as many times as necessary, then looks up (away from the text) and tells you what the phrase or sentence says. This encourages students to read for ideas, rather than for word recognition.

Developing Reading Activities

Developing reading activities involves more than identifying a text that is "at the right level," writing a set of comprehension questions for students to answer after reading, handing out the assignment and sending students away to do it. A fully-developed reading activity supports students as readers through pre-reading, while-reading, and post-reading activities.

As you design reading tasks, keep in mind that complete recall of all the information in a text is an unrealistic expectation even for native speakers. Reading activities that are meant to

increase communicative competence should be success oriented and build up students' confidence in their reading ability.

Construct the reading activity around a purpose that has significance for the students

Make sure students understand what the purpose for reading is: to get the main idea, obtain specific information, understand most or the entire message, enjoy a story, or decide whether or not to read more. Recognizing the purpose for reading will help students to select appropriate reading strategies.

Define the activity's instructional goal and the appropriate type of response

In addition to the main purpose for reading, an activity can also have one or more instructional purposes, such as practicing or reviewing specific grammatical constructions, introducing new vocabulary, or familiarizing students with the typical structure of a certain type of text.

Check the level of difficulty of the text

The factors listed below can help you judge the relative ease or difficulty of a reading text for a particular purpose and a particular group of students.

- How is the information organized? Does the story line, narrative, or instruction conform to familiar expectations? Texts in which the events are presented in natural chronological order, which have an informative title, and which present the information following an obvious organization (main ideas first, details and examples second) are easier to follow.
- How familiar are the students with the topic? Remember that misapplication of background knowledge due to cultural differences can create major comprehension difficulties.
- Does the text contain redundancy? At the lower levels of proficiency, listeners may find short, simple messages easier to process, but students with higher proficiency benefit from the natural redundancy of authentic language.

- Does the text offer visual support to aid in reading comprehension? Visual aids such as photographs, maps, and diagrams help students preview the content of the text, guess the meanings of unknown words, and check comprehension while reading.

Remember that the level of difficulty of a text is not the same as the level of difficulty of a reading task. Students who lack the vocabulary to identify all of the items on a menu can still determine whether the restaurant serves steak and whether they can afford to order one.

Use pre-reading activities to prepare students for reading

The activities you use during pre-reading may serve as preparation in several ways. During pre-reading you may:

- Assess students' background knowledge of the topic and linguistic content of the text
- Give students the background knowledge necessary for comprehension of the text, or activate the existing knowledge that the students possess
- Clarify any cultural information which may be necessary to comprehend the passage
- Make students aware of the type of text they will be reading and the purpose(s) for reading
- Provide opportunities for group or collaborative work and for class discussion activities

Sample pre-reading activities:

- Using the title, subtitles, and divisions within the text to predict content and organization or sequence of information
- Looking at pictures, maps, diagrams, or graphs and their captions
- Talking about the author's background, writing style, and usual topics
- Skimming to find the theme or main idea and eliciting related prior knowledge
- Reviewing vocabulary or grammatical structures
- Reading over the comprehension questions to focus attention on finding that information while reading

- Constructing semantic webs (a graphic arrangement of concepts or words showing how they are related)
- Doing guided practice with guessing meaning from context or checking comprehension while reading

Pre-reading activities are most important at levels1 and 2 of language proficiency of reading instruction. As students become more proficient at using reading strategies, you will be able to reduce the amount of guided pre-reading and allow students to do these activities themselves.

The while-reading activities should be matched to the purpose for reading. In while-reading activities, students check their comprehension as they read. The purpose for reading determines the appropriate type and level of comprehension.

a) When reading for specific information, students need to ask themselves, have I obtained the information I was looking for?
b) When reading for pleasure, students need to ask themselves: "Do I understand the story line/sequence of ideas well enough to enjoy reading this?"
c) When reading for thorough understanding (intensive reading), students need to ask themselves, Do I understand each main idea and how the author supports it? Does what I'm reading agree with my predictions, and, if not, how does it differ? To check comprehension in this situation, students may
    - Stop at the end of each section to review and check their predictions, restate the main idea and summarize the section
    - Use the comprehension questions as guides to the text, stopping to answer them as they read

Post-reading activities are tied up with the reading purpose set, so that students check and discuss activities done while reading and make use what they have read in meaningful way. At this stage teachers can build their students language competence by concentrating on some linguistic or language features of the text.

The aims of post reading work are:

a) to help students use their acquired knowledge in similar readings.
b) to help them integrate their reading skills with the other language skills: listening, speaking and writing.
c) to help them integrate with the foreign culture.
d) to make use of key words and structures to summarize the reading passage.
e) to extract the main idea of the paragraph or a reading text.
f) to interpret descriptions (outlining and summarizing).

Post reading also include any reactions to the text and to the while reading work, for example, learners say whether they liked it, and found it useful or not.

Samples of Post-reading Activities:

- Discussions or debates about the text
- Summarizing text orally or written
- Reviewing texts
- Using a "follow up" speaking task related to the topic
- Looking at the language of the text (e.g. collocations).
- Write a reply
- Act out/Role play

Reading Aloud

A student's performance when reading aloud is not a reliable indicator of that student's reading ability. A student who is perfectly capable of understanding a given text when reading it silently may stumble when asked to combine comprehension with word recognition and speaking ability in the way that reading aloud requires.

In addition, reading aloud is a task that students will rarely, if ever, need to do outside of the classroom. As a method of assessment, therefore, it is not authentic: It does not test a student's ability to use reading to accomplish a purpose or goal.

However, reading aloud can help a teacher assess whether a student is "seeing" word endings and other grammatical features when reading. To use reading aloud for this purpose, adopt the "read and look up" approach: Ask the student to read a sentence silently one or more times, until comfortable with the content, then look up and tell you what it says. This procedure allows the student to process the text, and lets you see the results of that processing and know what elements, if any, the student is missing.

c) Methods of assessment of reading skills

Assessing Reading Proficiency

One of the most challenging tasks for language instructors is finding effective ways to determine what and how much their students are actually learning. Instructors need to think carefully about what kinds of knowledge their tests allow students to demonstrate.

"Assessment should always have more to do with helping students grow than with cataloging their mistakes." Carol Tomlinson.

Before assessing students instructor should ponder the following questions:

What do you assess? Why do you assess? How do you assess? When do you asses

Reading ability is very difficult to assess accurately. In the communicative competence model, a student's reading level is the level at which that student is able to use reading to accomplish communication goals. This means that assessment of reading ability needs to be correlated with purposes for reading.

In order to provide authentic assessment of students' reading proficiency, a post-listening activity must reflect the real-life uses to which students might put information they have gained through reading.

- It must have a purpose other than assessment
- It must require students to demonstrate their level of reading comprehension by completing some task

To develop authentic assessment activities, consider the type of response that reading a particular selection would elicit in a non-classroom situation. For example, after reading a weather report, one might decide what to wear the next day; after reading a set of instructions, one might repeat them to someone else; after reading a short story, one might discuss the story line with friends.

Use this response type as a base for selecting appropriate post-reading tasks. You can then develop a checklist or rubric that will allow you to evaluate each student's comprehension of specific parts of the text.

While using traditional tests, instructors should consider whether these tests are accurate reflections of authentic language use. The tests usually do not present reading comprehension questions until after students have read or listened to the selection. In real life, however, people know what information they are seeking before they read or listen. That is, they have specific information gaps in mind as they begin, and those gaps define the purpose for reading or listening. The www.nclrc.org/ internet site suggests that in order to make language tests more like authentic reading activities, instructors can give students the comprehension questions before they read the selection. This procedure sets up the information gaps that students will then seek to fill as they listen or read. It also mentions that instructors need to be careful about what traditional written tests are actually testing. A test on which students read a text or paragraph and then answer multiple-choice questions is testing their knowledge of the language used in the questions as well as that used in the text itself. If the language used in the questions is not appropriate for students' proficiency level, the test will not reflect their ability accurately.

When the goal of language instruction is the development of communicative competence, instructors can supplement traditional tests with alternative assessment methods that provide more accurate measures of progress toward communication proficiency goals. This can be done by combining formative and summative types of assessment.

Before choosing a type of reading skills assessment instructor should keep in mind that reading skills are specific abilities which enable a reader

- to read the written form as meaningful language
- to read anything written with independence, comprehension and fluency, and
- to mentally interact with the message.

Let us focus on some kinds of reading skills:

- Word attack skills let the reader figure out new words.
- Comprehension skills help the reader predict the next word, phrase, or sentence quickly enough to speed recognition.
- Fluency skills help the readers see larger segments, phrases, and groups of words as wholes.
- Critical reading skills help the reader see the relationship of ideas and use these in reading with meaning and fluency.

CONCLUSION

A great deal of teacher-education research has been focusing on issues related to "effective teaching". Effective teaching research refers to attempts to characterize or evaluate those attributes that make a teacher and the teaching process effective. This research movement developed because it became more apparent to educational researchers that the teacher is the most factor of the teaching and learning experience. Therefore, new interest has been focused on the teacher, on what the teacher is doing in the classroom, on attributes of effective teacher, and more currently, on interaction in the classroom, teacher's judgments, teachers' decision-making, and teacher' believes.

Throughout the thesis, I have mentioned a variety of teaching strategies and techniques for enhancing students' emergent literacy, comprehension, content reading and other development. Many of these teaching techniques are equally applicable to enhancing students' study skills and strategies.

In the thesis, I focused on scaffolded reading techniques for effective reading instruction. Graves and Graves (1994) have described a "scaffolded reading experience" as a set of pre reading, during-reading, and post reading activities especially designed to assist a particular group of students in successfully understanding, learning from, and enjoying a particular reading. Graves and Graves indicated that they have developed this scaffolded reading technique from research and ideas that include but are not limited:

- The need for student success (Brothy,1986)
- Schema theory (Rumelhart, 1980)
- Constructivist ideas, including learners constructing their own meanings;
- The importance of working with others, as in cooperative learning (Slavin 1987)
- Interactive models ideas, especially the idea that readers use both text and their background knowledge to understand their readings

- "generative learning" (Wittrock 1986, 1990), which is meaningful learning that results in real understanding, remembering what is learned, and being able to apply what is learned to new situations, and which comes about when learners generate meaningful relationships involving ideas that are in the text;
- scaffolding, which involves teacher support and a gradual release of that support as learners can take over more and more of task demands on their own – scaffolding involves modeling, guided supported practice, and adjustment of supports, as needed.

Teachers should continuously assess their students' reading skills and strategies and use this information as the bases for instruction, and students themselves should be given opportunities to assess their growth and development as a part on this process. The daily and long-range planning assessment of reading skills and strategies is essential in teaching reading lessons at both levels. Although formal assessment may not take place every day, there are many kinds of informal assessment which may be applied within the context of actual classroom work. The efficient ways of students' informal assessment are observation, evaluation of students work, listening to students read, students' self-assessment, just interacting with students' instructional and non-instructional settings.

Instructors often use comprehension questions to test whether students have understood what they have read. In order to test comprehension appropriately, these questions need to be coordinated with the purpose for reading. If the purpose is to find specific information, comprehension questions should focus on that information. If the purpose is to understand an opinion and the arguments that support it, comprehension questions should ask about those points.

When the purpose for reading is enjoyment, comprehension questions are beside the point. As a more authentic form of assessment, have students talk or write about why they found the text enjoyable and interesting (or not).

However, the reading instructors should keep in mind that the main objective of the reading classes is to enable the students to enjoy reading in English and to read without help with sufficient speed. I have tried in this thesis to introduce the main strategies and techniques employed in teaching reading efficiently.

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